AFTER THE PROPOSAL.

[Isaac R. Pennypacker in Good Cheer.]

I know a little street, just wide
Enough to have a sunny side.
Within the gardens all a-row
The vines creep round and roses grow.
"Come, sweet, and see, and say if you
Think house so small full large for two.
Tho' small, no doubt there's room in it
To look around and bide a bit;

"To bide a bit for hope to grow.
There is not room for pride or show,
There's room for love and love's increase;
There's room to bar out strife with peace.
There's room to give and take and share;
The cares to come there's room to bear.
But none for envy, none to care
What neighbors do or what they wear.

"If no gay teams prance past our door,
We'll inward turn our thoughts the more;
If each serves each, Love's retinue
Will make the service light and true.
All space and life will crowded be
With one sweet guest, felicity;
And narrow street will stretch away
To hilltops whence the bright dawns stray."

Wonderful Chess Playing.

[Theodore Stanton's Paris Letter.]

The historial home of chess in Paris is the famous Cafe de la Regence in front of the Theater Francais. Of all Parisian cafes, the Regence has, perhaps, been the least affected by the changes of time. It is to-day much the same as it was more than 100 years ago, when the Chess club, whose founders were Piron, the celebrated epigrammatist; Rousseau, Diderot, and Philidor, chose it as their headquarters.

But enough of the past; let us enter the cafe and see who are there to-day. More than ordinary animation prevailed there on a certain evening not many days ago. Mr. Kieffer, the gentlemanly proprietor whom I met at the door, informed me that Professor Taubenhaus, the well-known player and instructor in chess, was about to give an exhibition of his remarkable skill and quickness of thought.

Twenty-six men were seated before as many chess-boards, and Mr. Taubenhaus, in evening dress, was passing rapidly from one table to the other, glancing for an instant at the pieces and making his moves with a celerity that was only surpassed by its acuteness. In the early stages of the game or rather games, Mr. Taubenhaus made the rounds of the twenty-six tables in eight minutes by the watch, and even the most difficult move never occupied more than a minute, while the whole exhibition was completed within three hours, Mr. Taubenhaus losing, if I am not mistaken, but three games out of the twenty-six. It was a wonderful sight to watch this slender, nervous genius, with his neck bent forward in order to bring his eyes nearer the board, studying intently for a moment the situation of his own and his opponent's men, and then, pushing a piece with a quick movement of the hand, hurry on to repeat the operation at the next table. I stood in perfect amazement at this astounding revelation of the powers of the human intellect. And I was not alone in my marvel. The Cafe de la Regence was crowded that night with chess professionals and amateurs from all nations.

England and Russia's War Footing.

[Exchange.]

When an irresistible body comes in contact with an immovable one the result is supposed to be something terrific. When England's reputation as a fighter is considered nd then Russia's huge army, the largest in the world, is stood up alongside of it, the result of a war between these nations is looked upon with dread. Russia's regular army is the largest in the world, and her navy has more vessels han that of any other nation. The standing army of Russia consists of 780,000 men, and her navy of 373 vessels. Russia pays for the maintenaunce of her army $15,000,000 a year, a sum several millions greater than that paid by any other nation for this purpose.

Great Britain's standing army is only 182,000 men against Russia's 780,000, and her army, when on a war footing, 642,000, against Russia's 2,300,000 when on a war footing. England pays $99,000,000 a year for her army, against Russia's $125,000,000. And yet Great Britain's army costs $2.37 for each head of her population, while Russia's costs her only $1.27 per inhabitant. Even if Great Britain takes into account her India contingent (the army of Britis' India is 190,000, and on a war footing 380,000) the total would be, in either case, less than half of Russia's force.

Russia has the largest standing army of the world—780,000. Italy comes next with 750,000, France next with 530,000, Germany next with 445,000, China next with 300,000, Austria and Hungaria with 283,000, British India next with 190,000, Great Britain next with 182,000.

Russia's navy has 373 vessels, that of France 302, Great Britain's 246, though it is proper to add that Great Britain's navy cost about three times as much as that of Russia.

An East Indian Legend.

[Psychol d World.]

In East India there is a legend that ages ago mankind became so very bad that God determined to destroy all except just enough to begin with anew. The exceptions were preserved, along with pairs of all sorts animals, in a golden palace on a mountain top. A boy and girl, born of parents who were "neither good nor bad," had been previously carried off by an angel from their respective homes on the day of their birth, and were brought up in a crystal palace, suspended in mid air, where they were attended by a mute female figure of gold. When they grew up they were married, and a girl was born to them. The destruction of the wicked having been effected by fire, and the earth thereby being greatly smirched, giants were sent to wash it clean. They used so much water that a deluge was produced and the water rose so high that the golden palace and its inmates were in danger of being submerged, but were miraculously preserved.

Honesty the Best Policy.

[Philadelphia Call.]

"Yes," said the Honest Farmer, "I know there are people what always puts the big apples at the top of the bar'l, but I don't."

"That's right," exclaimed the deacon admiringly. "I have always tried to convince folks that that sort o' thing don't pay in the long run."

"If they'd go to the city once in a while they'd learn something. I always put my big apples at the bottom of the bar'l."

"That's the way."

"Yes; you see people has got so suspicious that they most always open the bar'l at the bottom nowadays."

How He Silenced the Barber.

[Kennebec Journal.]

There is a barber in town who has a reputation for loquacity. Recently one of his victims, when taking a seat in the chair, demurely pulled a pair of ear-coverings, for use in cold weather, from his pocket, and tucked them over his ears. The talkative young man was silent.

Masonic Charity.

[London Letter.]

During the eleven years in which the prince of Wales has been at the head of the Free Masons in England that craft has contributed $17,500,000 to the three Masonic charitable institutions in London.

SUGAR-MAKING.

OLD-TIME METHODS OF MAPLE MANUFACTURE IN HOOSIERDOM.

Scenes in and About an Old-Fashioned Sugar-Camp in Indiana—Tapping the Trees—"Sugar Troughs"—Work, Fun and Frolic.

[Indianapolis Journal.]

The regular typical "sugar weather," freezing at night, thawing and slopping by day, recalls the scenes and fashions of a day long past, when "home-made sugar"—we never called it "maple" nor misnamed the tree that way, except by Yankee inculcation—was not a fancy confection, a luxury beyond the "barber pole" candy of infancy, but a necessity, when "Orleans" sugar was not to be had, or was too expensive for the poor in pocket, as many a rich man of to-day was in that day. The free-handed householder laid in his year's stock of sugar by the time the apple trees were in bloom, at the latest, and frequently before the frost was well out of the ground. It deteriorated in the close chests—the protection against ants and flies—or in cloth-headed barrels, and lost much of the peculiar flavor of the early product. It got musty and weak to the "sweet tooth," though possibly not to the tea. For cooking it was never so good as the cane product. It did not mix well, and left black spots of undiffused sugar that variegated the taste of cake too gaudily. In molasses it was best, and it is still unmatched for pancakes and fritters and all table use. No syrup equals it, no honey or hive or hand rivals it for these uses. The demand for it has manufactured a score of imitations, but they can't fool the tongue that has been taught in the cradle the taste of the essence of dew, distilled through 10,000,000 tubes in the sugar tree.

When the sugar season—"a movable feast," like Easter—came on, sometimes early in February, sometimes early in March, but usually between the two, the owner of a "sugar camp"—some few untutored or overtutored noodles call it "sugar brush"—he would, with the customary wastefulness of backwoods habits, go out with his ax and chop fresh cuts in old trees and new cuts in fresh trees, to collect the water in. One primitive fashion was to slope a cut four or five inches into the body of the tree, a foot or more up, and scooped at the bottom into a rude little trough, from which the water was dipped as fast as it gathered sufficiently to be reached. This was wasteful every way, and sensible farmers, after cutting a little notch, would bore a hole a couple of inches or so deep and drive in a spile of alder with the pith punched out. In time, though, the notch was abandoned, and the hole bored directly through the bark, and tin tubes substituted in some cases for the elder spiles. "Sugar troughs" made of a cut two or three feet long, of a log a foot or more in diameter, split in half sometimes, and hollowed out to hold a couple of gallons or so, were in general use, but they were wasteful, and those who could afford money better than muscle bought crocks and buckets. These were emptied and sometimes by hand, sometimes by sleds or wagons carrying tubs, the water was taken to the kettles at rounds made at regular intervals.

The primitive furnace long remained—probably in many places yet remains—in use, and that was a couple of big logs a dozen feet long, and a foot or two in diameter laid parallel and far enough apart to make room for a fair pile of fuel between them. On these the kettle—sometimes two or three, or more, owing to the number of trees tapped—were set, and the water boiled down, added to it, it went down and still boiled down till it grew "thick and slab," and then the fragrance that was on the passing breeze through the grove could have discounted "nard and cassia's balmy smells." Pungent, inviting, suggestive, it is the "bouquet" of our backwoods nectar, and commonly surrounded by blooming hebes of the cabin and the kitchen. The fitful flashes of fire, tempered to the bubbling of the kettles, which, unguarded, sometimes boiled over, lit up the woods about with a somber glow that gave the streaks of snow, the bare boughs of the trees, the gray trunks and the brown leaves at their roots a sort of diabolical, gory look, as if a gleam of pandemonium came through some crack or knot-hole, and the figures standing over the kettles or seated on the end of the furnace logs might have been mistaken by eyes untaught of the keener perceptions of the nose, for lazy devils loafing about a fire they hadn't energy enough to keep from going out.

The scenes of a sugar camp, however, were anything but somber in spirit, whatever the light upon them. There wasn't much idling, and there was always fun. If the camp owners had families, and the backwoodsman without one was a wonder, the young folks made a frolic of the work of "stirring off" or graining the sugar. The name was eminently descriptive. To keep the sugar from solidifying into a mass of impenetrable candy it had to be incessantly stirred, and the work was too hard for anybody to endure long at a time. But as Shakespeare might have said, and did nearly say, the fun "physicked the pain." The manager, man or woman, frequently tested the condition of the syrup by pouring a spoonful into a "gourd" of cold sugar water and noticing its "ropiness," its rapidity of cooling, its tendency to "grain," and thereby judging when it was neccessary to reduce the fire or put it out. And all the while the "stirring-off" went briskly on with many a laugh, and giggle, and squeal of girlish glee or boyish frolic. Egg shells were filled with the ungrained denser syrup, to cool into lumps as hard as "dornicks," or cast into the mold of teacups greased with butter or clean lard to keep it from sticking, or rudely molded into some uncouth form or formless chunk.

Most of the sugar woods anywhere near the city have long been gone in smoke, and ashes, and heat that has mixed with the universe of correlated forces. When one thinks of the unmitigated folly of cutting down sugar trees for firewood as long as any thing else that would burn could be had, it seems as if a part of Carlyle's cynical snarl at "thirty millions of people, most fools," were a fair hit. The result is that genuine "country sugar," home made sugar, "maple sugar," is as hard to come by as a politician who doesn't want an office."

Safety Bank-Note Paper.

[Chicago Herald.]

A safety paper manufactured by a Massachusetts mill will make it difficult for any one to tamper with bank notes or checks printed upon it. The coloring matter of the paper is so prepared that the application of any chemical removes the ink will permanently change the color of the paper, and an ingenious device is added which betrays at once any attempt to make an erasure. Between the two the enterprising forger will be sure to come to grief.

New Method of Glass Blowing.

[Foreign Letter.]

In a glass works near Paris air stored under pressure has been made to successfully supersede glass blowing by the mouth, except in a few cases.